



September 27, 2022

# SR 912 at Michigan Avenue Bridges Project Public Hearing

Lake County | Des No. 1703011

# Agenda

## Welcome & Introductions

- INDOT
  - Mike Grylewicz, Project Manager
  - Adam Parkhouse, Communications Director
- Parsons
  - John LaBlonde, Project Manager
  - Juliet Port, Environmental Lead



## Housekeeping Items

- Please sign-in
- Pick up copies of handouts
- Formal Public Hearing
  - Presentations
  - Public Statements for the Record
  - Adjourn Formal Hearing
- Multiple ways to comment
  - Verbal statement tonight
  - Written comments tonight
  - By mail or email after hearing
  - Call INDOT customer service

**Public Comment Period Ends  
October 11, 2022**

# Public Hearing Format Overview

## Public Hearing Format

- **Open House begins at 5:00 p.m.**
  - Review project graphics
  - Speak with project team members
  - Sign up to speak during formal portion
- **Formal Hearing begins at 6:00 p.m.**
  - Team will present project information
  - Verbal comment period will follow the presentation
  - Those wishing to speak will be called in the order their requests were received



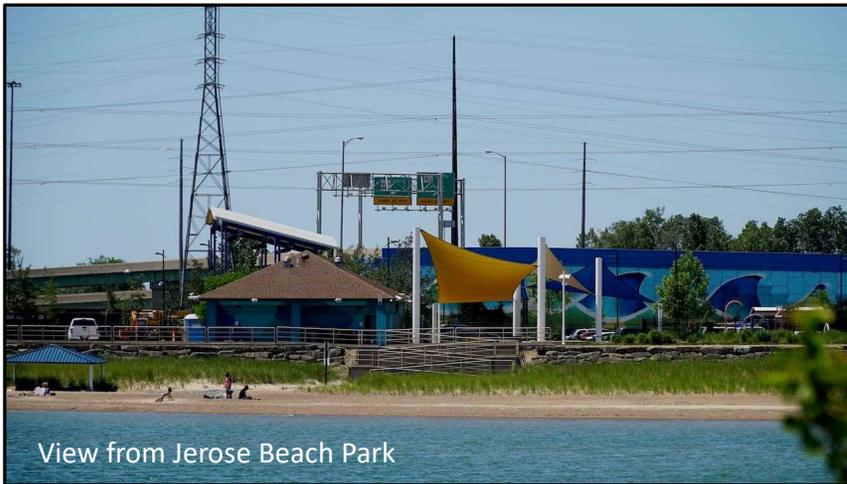
**Team members available to answer questions throughout the event**

# Project Location

City of East Chicago, Lake County

SR 912 Interchange

Des. 1703011



View from Jerose Beach Park



# Stakeholders

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Lake County
- City of East Chicago
- Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC)
- Tribal Governments
- Railroads
- Transit Providers
- Emergency Services
- Area Businesses
- Local Schools
- Religious Institutions
- Community Organizations
- Area Residents
- Historic Consulting Parties



# Public Notices

## Section 106 Findings

- FHWA finding of “No Adverse Effect” was published in the *NWI Times* on February 10, 2022, offering the public an opportunity to comment. The public comment period ended on March 12, 2022.

## Public Hearing

- *NWI Times* - September 13, 2022, and September 20, 2022
- *IndyStar* - September 13, 2022, and September 20, 2022
- Mailed or Emailed to project stakeholders

 **INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ¶ DES. # 1703011 (et al.) ¶

SR 912 and Michigan Avenue Bridges Project ¶  
in Lake County ¶

¶  
The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) will host a public hearing on Thursday, June 30, 2022 at the East Chicago Public Library – Main Branch, 2401 E Columbus Dr., East Chicago, IN 46312. The hearing will begin at 6:00 p.m. The purpose of the public hearing is to offer all interested persons an opportunity to comment on current preliminary design plans for the SR 912 and Michigan Avenue Bridges Project in Lake County. Doors will open at 5:00 p.m. and project team members will be available before and following the formal hearing procedure. ¶

¶  
The project is located at the SR 912 and Michigan Avenue interchange, 1.34 miles west of US-12. The project contains five roadway bridges and one pedestrian bridge that are part of an interchange. The interchange is the main entrance into the Cleveland-Cliffs Indiana Harbor steel plant and provides alternate access to the Ameristar Casino, George Park, and other lakefront facilities. ¶

¶  
The project proposes to reconstruct the Michigan Avenue bridge which spans SR 912, ramps, and three railroads (Norfolk Southern, Indiana Harbor Belt and Wisconsin Central, and Amtrak) and install a new roundabout on the southern portion of the interchange. The southern ramps (Ramp H and Ramp B) will be realigned, and their bridges will be removed. The northern ramps (Ramp NEC and Ramp I) and their bridges will be rehabilitated. Existing retaining walls will be removed and replaced with embankments and/or walls. Existing pavement, curb and gutter will be repaired or replaced as needed. A closed pedestrian bridge over the railroads will be removed and drainage issues south of SR 912 will be addressed with new inlet structures and curb cuts. Replacement of overhead sign structures and installation of a new roundabout lighting system is also proposed. ¶

¶  
Construction is anticipated to begin in Spring of 2023. During the reconstruction, the Michigan Avenue Bridge will be closed and detours will be provided. The goal is to expedite construction and identify ways to reduce closure time. MOT details will be presented during the public hearing. Access to all properties will be maintained during construction. INDOT will coordinate with emergency services, local school corporation officials, and project stakeholders to ensure potential disruptions and impacts are minimized as much as possible. ¶

¶  
The preferred alternative will occur almost entirely within existing, previously disturbed right-of-way (ROW) but will require approximately 4.83 acres of temporary ROW, including “right-of-entry” ROW during construction. No commercial or residential relocations are required. Phased construction and nearby interchanges will be used to maintain access to all residences and businesses throughout construction. ¶

¶  
This project will have an Adverse Effect to the Non-Select historic Ramp B over B bridge by removing it, and it will have No Adverse Effect to the historic Inland Steel Office Building. No additional historic properties will be affected. This project will not impact natural resources except for approximately 7.5 acres of terrestrial habitat and 0.072 acre of wetlands. Temporary noise impacts will occur during construction; however, they will be resolved once construction has been completed. ¶

¶  
Federal, state, and local funds are proposed to be used for construction of this project. INDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have agreed that this project poses minimal impact to natural environment. A Categorical Exclusion (CE) environmental document has been prepared for the project. The environmental documentation and preliminary design information is available to view prior at the following locations: ¶

¶  
1. → City of East Chicago Public Library – Main Branch: 2401 E Columbus Dr., East Chicago, IN 46312 ¶

Page 1 ¶ 

# Project Development Process

## How are projects selected?

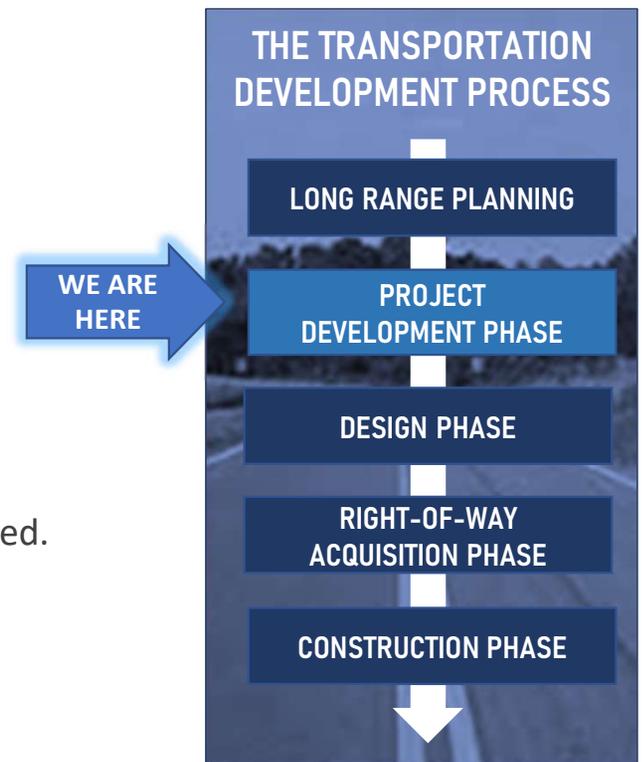
**Step 1 Long Range Planning:** INDOT and local agencies conduct ongoing long-range transportation planning to identify and prioritize projects.

**Step 2 Project Development:** Includes environmental analysis, alternatives evaluation, conceptual engineering, and public involvement.

**Step 3 Design:** Detailed construction plans are prepared.

**Step 4 Right-of-Way Acquisition:** Entails the acquisition of right-of-way, if needed.

**Step 5 Construction:** The project is built.



# Project Development Process - Step 2

## Environmental Analysis



### Schedule

Fall 2021 – Analysis Begins  
Fall 2021 – Public Involvement

Summer 2022 - Draft Document  
Fall 2022 - Public Hearing

Winter 2022 - Final Document  
Spring 2023 - Final Design

Award Contract - 2023

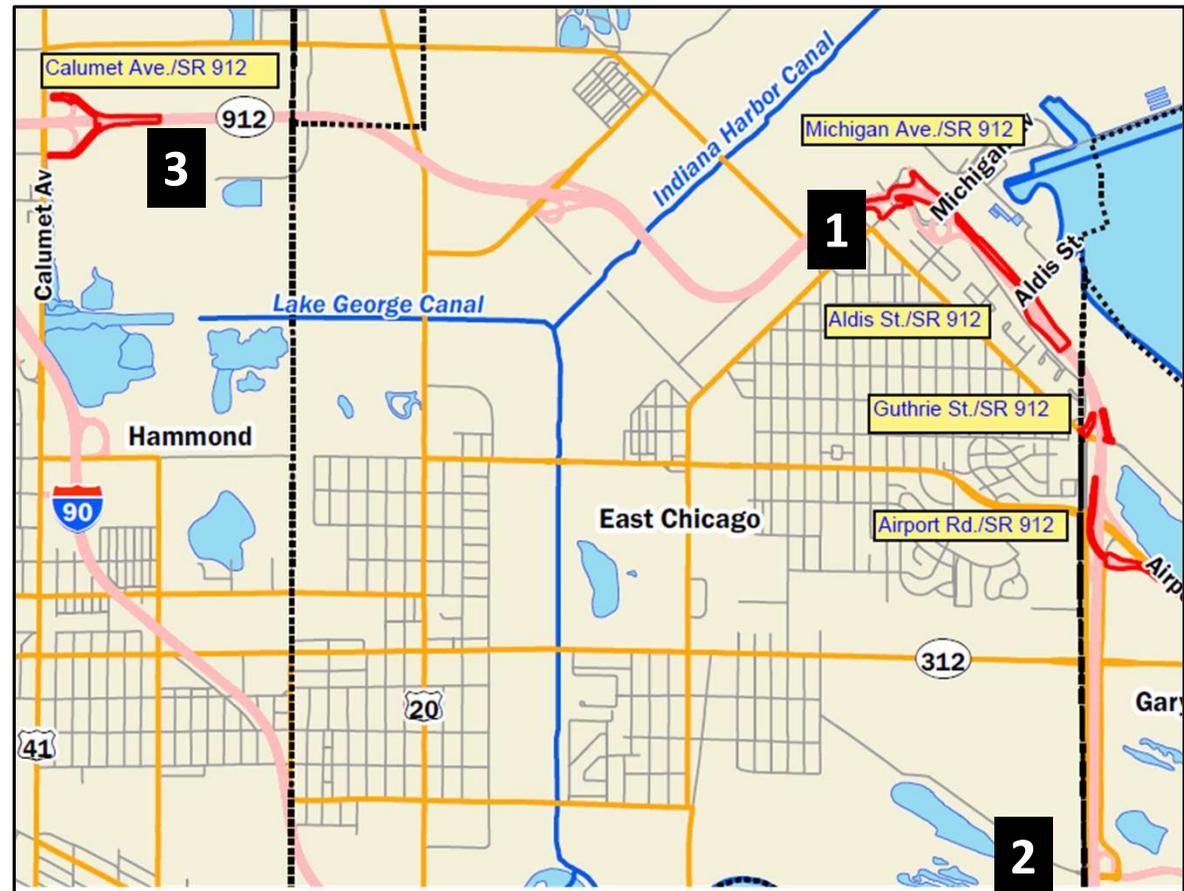
Public Involvement occurs throughout the process



# Other Projects

## Related projects include:

- SR 912 Roadway and Ramp
- SR 912 Bridge over IHB and NS RR
- SR 912 Bridge over CSX RR & Amoco Service Road



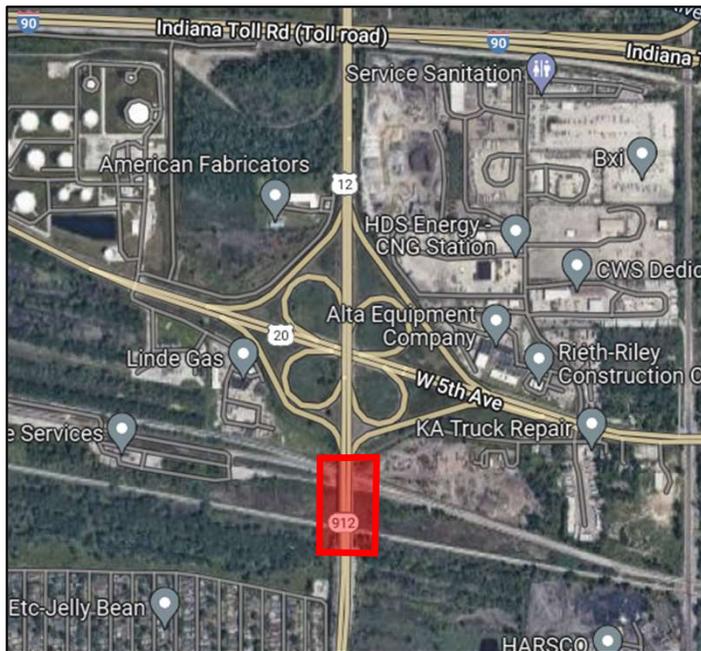
# Other Bridge Projects

- 1 SR 912 Roadway and Ramp 4A**
- Remove Ramp 4A
  - Replace approximately 5.3 miles of pavement
  - Construction in Spring 2023
  - Des. 1800067  
(Hammond, Whiting, East Chicago, and Gary)

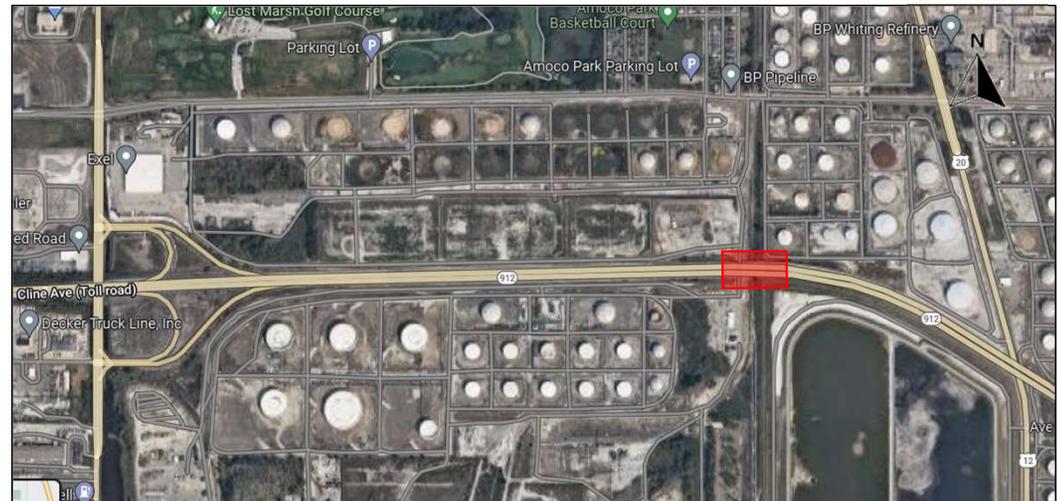


# Other Bridge Projects

- 2** **SR 912 Bridge over IHB and NS RR**
- Preventative Maintenance - bridge painting
  - Construction in Spring 2024
  - Des. 1800533 (East Chicago and Gary)



- 3** **SR 912 Bridge over CSX RR & Amoco Service Road**
- Preventative Maintenance – deck overlay, patching, various repairs
  - Construction in Spring 2024
  - Des. 2000039 (Hammond)





# Project Purpose & Need

## Project Purpose:

- Improve interchange safety
- Improve bridge conditions
- Extend pavement service life
- Repair cracked/settled retaining walls
- Provide a median barrier along SR 912
- Remove the non-functional pedestrian bridge



# Project Purpose & Need

## Project Need:

- Deteriorated condition of bridges and roadway pavement
  - Michigan Avenue Bridge
  - Ramp B over B
  - Ramp H over B
  - Ramp I
  - Ramp NEC
  - Closed pedestrian bridge
- Current configuration does not meet current design standards
  - Narrow inside and outside shoulders
  - Low vertical clearances
  - Limited stopping sight distance

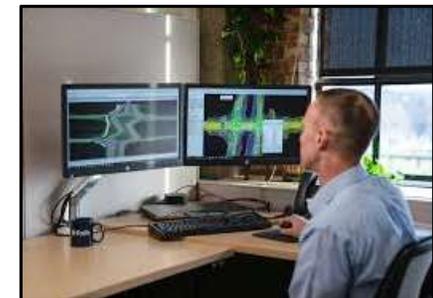


# Interchange Alternatives Evaluated

NEED INTERCHANGE ALTERNATIVES

## Alternatives Considered

- Alternative A No Build
- **Alternative A2\*** **Roundabout with One Bridge Replacement, Three Bridge Removals, and Two Bridge Rehabilitations**
- Alternative B1 Rehabilitation (Two-Lane or One-Lane Options (Meeting Standard))
- Alternative B2 Rehabilitation (Two-Lane or One-Lane Options (NOT Meeting Standard))
- Alternative C1 Rehabilitation (One-Way Pair Option) (Meeting Standard)
- Alternative C2 Rehabilitation (One-Way Pair Option) (NOT Meeting Standard)
- Alternative D Rehabilitate historic bridge (Non-Vehicular Use) and Build New Structure
- Alternative E Relocation of Historic Bridge and New Bridge Construction
- Alternative F Demolition of Historic Bridge and New Bridge Construction

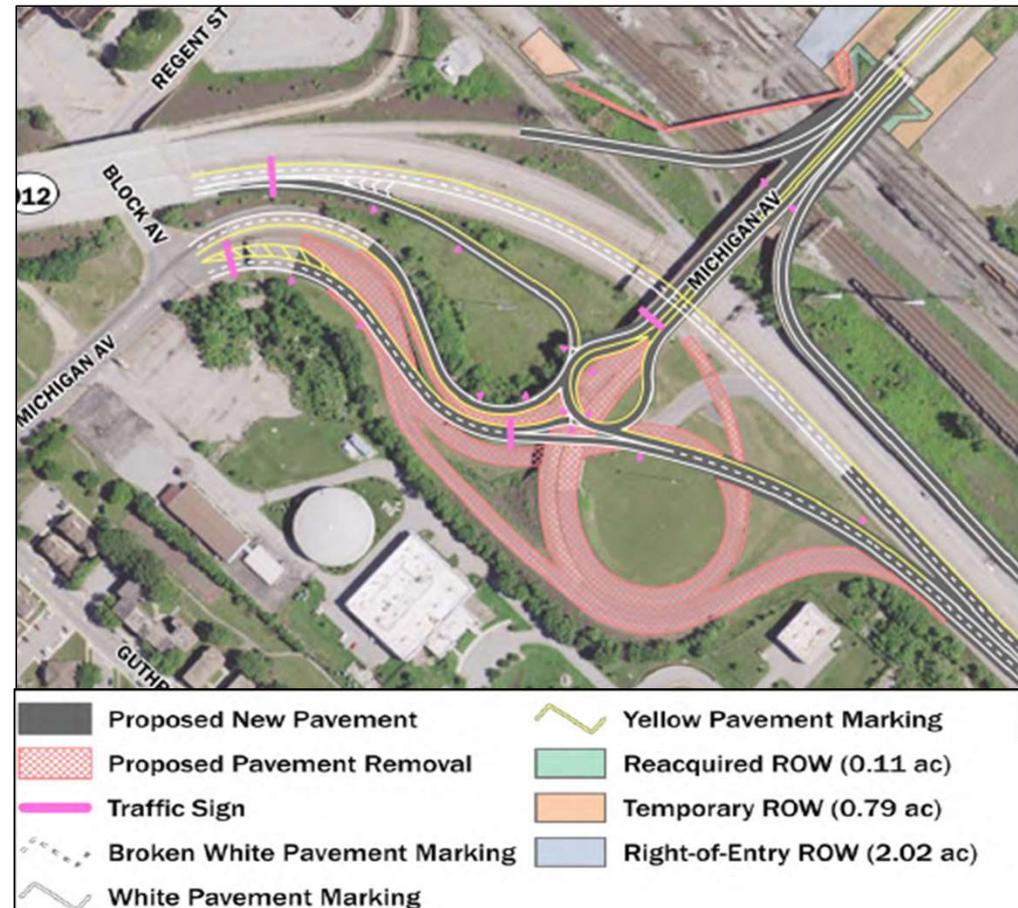


\* Preferred Alternative

# Preferred Alternative – Alternative 2A

## Key Features:

- Install roundabout at SR 912/Michigan Avenue
- Replace Michigan Avenue Bridge over SR 912
- Remove Bridges
  - Ramp H over B bridge
  - Ramp B over Ramp B bridge
  - Non-functional pedestrian bridge
- Rehabilitate Bridges
  - Ramp NEC and bridge
  - Ramp I and bridge
- Realign Ramps
  - Ramp G, Ramp H, and Ramp B
- Design considerations for freight, transit, first responders, and school buses
- Total new ROW 2.92 acres impacted



# Proposed Maintenance of Traffic

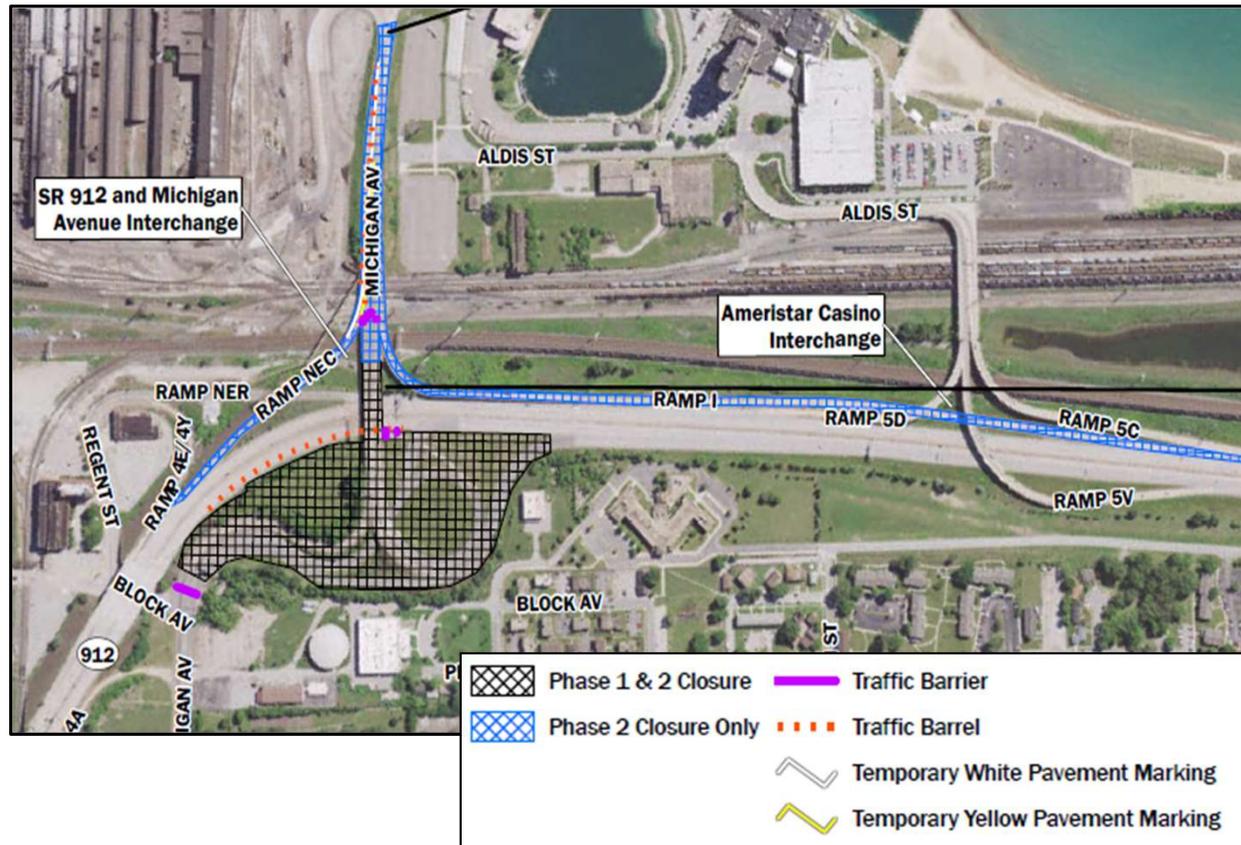
## Two Year-Long Phases

### Phase 1

- Ramps I and NEC to remain open
- South side of the SR 912/Michigan Avenue interchange closed
- Michigan Avenue bridge will be closed
- One EB lane and both WB lanes along SR 912 will be maintained

### Phase 2

- Michigan Avenue bridge and all ramps will be closed
- No official detour provided



# National Environmental Policy Act (1969)

## Federal Process

- Requires that federal agencies consider the effects of their actions on surrounding natural, cultural, and social environments:
  - Right-of-Way
  - Floodplains
  - Wetlands & Waterways
  - Noise
  - Air Quality
  - Hazardous Materials
  - Threatened & Endangered Species
  - Historic & Archaeological
- Requires public be provided the opportunity to be involved and comment
- Requires impacts be described in an environmental document



# Project Impacts Overview

Type	Impact	Summary
Relocations	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No Impacts</li> </ul>
Right-of-Way	4.83 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.81 acres of temporary plus 2.02 acres right-of-entry ROW from industrial properties</li> <li>0.11 acres of reacquired ROW</li> </ul>
Traffic Pattern	Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No changes in access; improved safety and efficiency</li> </ul>
Water/Wetlands	0.072 acre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wetland 1 = 0.042 acre</li> <li>Wetland 2 = 0.030 acre</li> </ul>
Terrestrial Habitat	7.5 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Habitat will be disturbed; possible benefit by removing ramps/replace with vegetation</li> </ul>
Parks/Recreation (Section 4f)	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No impacts / No changes in access</li> </ul>
Cultural Resources (Section 106)	2 locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ramp B over B Bridge - Removal</li> <li>Inland Steel Office Building / ArcelorMittal- No Adverse Effect</li> </ul>
Threatened & Endangered Species	Bats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect – with Avoidance and Minimization Measures (AMMs)"</li> </ul>
Noise	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis not required; no abatement is proposed</li> </ul>
Environmental Justice	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Populations are present but no disproportionate impacts</li> </ul>
Community impacts, public services, air quality, hazardous materials	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No impacts to communities, public services, air quality, or hazardous materials</li> </ul>

# National Historic Preservation Act (1966)

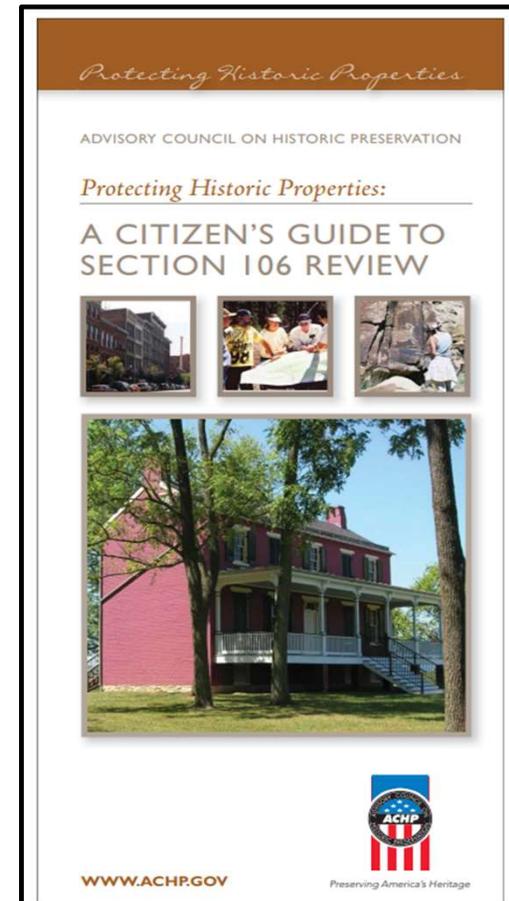
## NHPA Overview

Acknowledged the importance of protecting our nation's heritage and established policy for historic preservation.

- Charges federal agencies with responsible stewardship (Section 106)

## Section 106

- Requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their undertakings on listed or eligible historic properties
- Affords the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) the opportunity to consult



# Section 106 Review Process

## 4 Step Process:

### Step 1: **Initiate** consultation

- INDOT prepared and distributed early coordination notices to applicable federal, state, and local government stakeholders at the beginning of the environmental analysis

### Step 2: **Identify** historic properties

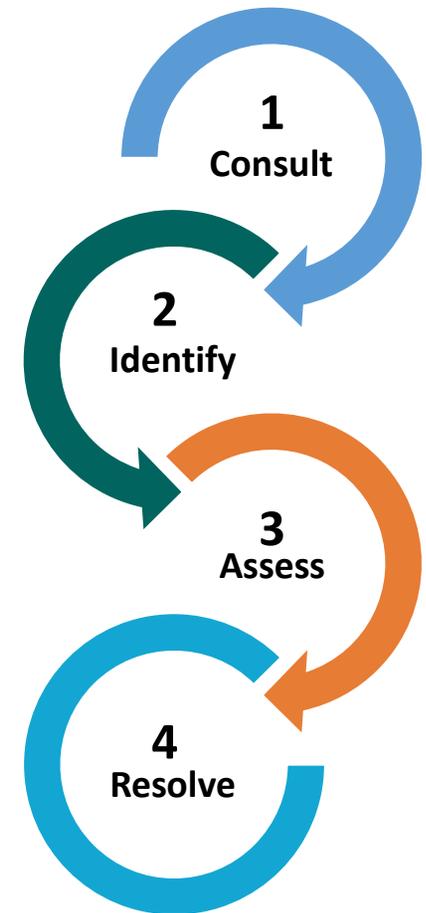
- One building will not be impacted by the project
- One bridge will be impacted (Ramp B over Ramp B Bridge) – State Historic Bridge Preservation process initiated

### Step 3: **Assess** effects on historic properties

- The potential effect of each alternative on identified historic properties was carefully evaluated and documented

### Step 4: **Resolve** any adverse effects

- Potentially adverse effects were resolved through coordination with the Indiana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Tribal officials, and applicable federal, state, and local government stakeholders



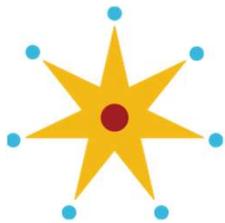
# Indiana's Historic Bridges Programmatic Agreement (HBPA)

- **Executed in 2006**
- **Streamlines the federal Section 106 process for historic bridges**
  - Determines if bridge rehabilitation for vehicular use is feasible and prudent
- **Created an inventory of bridges built before 1965**
  - Bridges listed in (or eligible for) NRHP are categorized as Select or Non-Select
    - Select: Most suitable for preservation; excellent examples of a given type of historic bridge
    - Non-Select: Not considered excellent example or not suitable for preservation

# Section 106 Evaluation

## Step 1 - Initiate Consultation

- Early coordination letters sent June 18, 2021
- Consulting parties:
  - FHWA
  - USACE
  - USFWS
  - USHUD
  - SHPO
  - Lake County
  - City of East Chicago
  - Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission
  - Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
  - Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
  - Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
  - Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians
  - Shawnee Tribe
  - Forest County Potawatomi Community



# Section 106 Process Timeline

## Step 2 - Identify Historic Properties

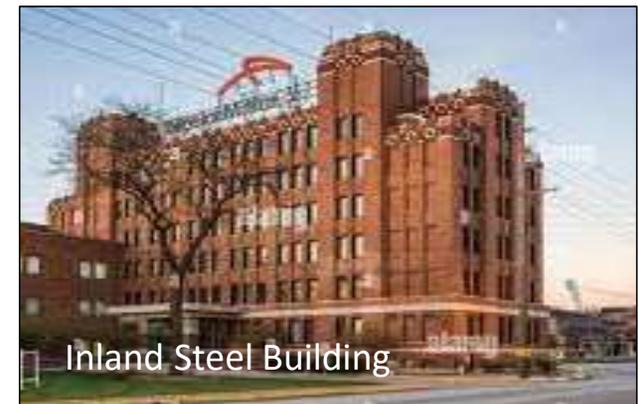
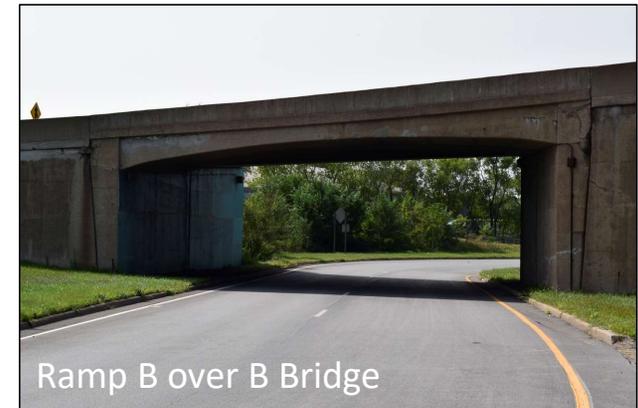
- *Historic Property Report* submitted May 18, 2021
- Two historic properties identified
  - Ramp B over B Bridge - “Non-Select” Bridge
  - Inland Steel Office Building

## Step 3 - Assess Project Effects

- *Historic Bridge Alternatives Analysis* submitted November 8, 2021

## Step 4 - Resolve Impacts

- Analysis documents options and outcomes
- Effect Finding approved February 7, 2022

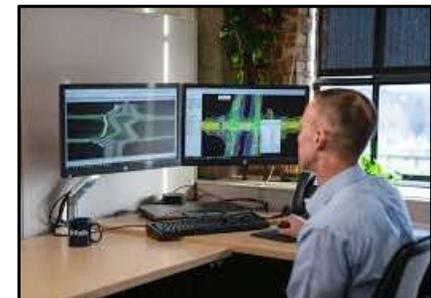


# Historic Bridge Alternatives Evaluated

## 9 Alternatives Considered

- Alternative A No Build
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\* Preferred Alternative



# Historic Bridge Marketing

## Numerous steps were taken to market the Ramp B over B Bridge:

- A public notice published in *Indianapolis Star* on December 17, 2020
- A public notice published in *NWI Times* on December 18, 2020
- Bridge availability was posted on INDOT website on December 17, 2020
- A bridge marketing sign was installed at the bridge on January 19, 2021



### INDOT Historic Bridge Program Website:

[www.in.gov/indot/current-programs/green-initiatives/indiana-historic-bridges-inventory](http://www.in.gov/indot/current-programs/green-initiatives/indiana-historic-bridges-inventory)

# Impacts: Historic Properties (Section 106)

## 2 Resources

- **Historic Building - Inland Steel Building**

- Built in 1930 – Art Deco Style
- State Historic Site
  - Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory #089-679-35181
- State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Review
  - “No Adverse Effect”

- **Historic Bridge - Ramp B over B Bridge**

- Built in 1959, funded in part by the Inland Steel Company
- Eligible for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listing
- Historic Bridge Inventory Review - Bridge is “Non-Select”
  - Not suitable candidate for preservation
  - Not considered an excellent example



# Next Steps

## **Receive Comments**

- Comments from stakeholders and the public will be collected through October 11, 2022

## **Review and Respond to Comments**

- Comments will be given full consideration during decision-making process
- Comment responses will be addressed in the environmental document

## **Final Environmental Document submitted to approval**

# Project Questions?

## Contact INDOT Customer Service



[855-INDOT4U \(463-6848\)](tel:855-INDOT4U)



[www.INDOT4U.com](http://www.INDOT4U.com)



# Public Comment Period

- **4 ways to submit your comments**

- Make a verbal statement at the hearing tonight
- Submit a written comment at the hearing tonight
- Submit a written comment after the hearing via mail or email to:

**Mail:**           INDOT SR 912/Michigan Ave. Bridge Project  
                          Attn: Juliet Port  
                          Parsons  
                          101 W. Ohio Street, Suite 2121  
                          Indianapolis, IN 46204

**E-mail:**         [Juliet.port@parsons.com](mailto:Juliet.port@parsons.com)



**Public comment period ends  
Tuesday, October 11, 2022**

Comments received during the public comment period will be included in the public hearing transcript and become part of the public record

- Contact INDOT Customer Service: 855-INDOT4U (855-463-6848)

*Please mention "SR 912 Bridge Project" in your comments*

Thank you  
for Participating

